

# VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

## **Interim Recommendations against the Use of Amantadine and Rimantadine for the Treatment or Prophylaxis of Influenza**

**TO:** Vermont Health Care Providers

**FROM:** Dr. Cort Lohff, State Epidemiologist  
Vermont Department of Health

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- On January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued recommendations against the use of amantadine and rimantadine for the treatment or prophylaxis of influenza for the current (2005-06) influenza season. Based on reports of use of these drugs to control influenza outbreaks in some long-term care facilities, this Alert is being issued to remind health care providers of these recommendations and the basis for them.
- The recommendations against the use of amantadine and rimantadine are based on data from the CDC that indicate that 91% of influenza A H3N2 strains tested - the predominant influenza strain in circulation in the United States - were resistant to these two drugs. All influenza viruses have demonstrated susceptibility to oseltamivir (Tamiflu<sup>TM</sup>) and zanamivir (Relenza<sup>TM</sup>), two other drugs available for the treatment or prophylaxis of influenza.
- On the basis of this information, the CDC issued a recommendation that neither amantadine nor rimantadine be used for the treatment or prophylaxis of influenza A in the United States for the remainder of the 2005–06 influenza season. During this period, oseltamivir (Tamiflu<sup>TM</sup>) or zanamivir (Relenza<sup>TM</sup>) should be selected if an antiviral medication is used for the treatment or prophylaxis of influenza.
- Additional information about the prevention and control of influenza is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> or by calling the Vermont Department of Health at 802 863-7240 [VT – 800-640-4374].